

I claim:

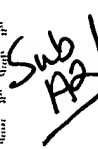
- Sub A1
1. A process for aiding a user in developing a search request, comprising
presenting to the user an interface for collecting from the user a keyphrase representative
of a user search request,
analyzing said user search request to identify at least one meaning associated with said
user search request,
processing said user search request and said at least one meaning to generate an expanded
search request represented as a boolean search strategy, and
providing said expanded search request to a search engine capable of identifying
information associated with said expanded search request.
 2. A process according to claim 1, wherein presenting to the user an interface includes
providing a source of profile data representative of information that may be displayed to
the user for guiding the user to supply information for refining the user search request.
 3. A process according to claim 2, wherein providing said source of profile data includes
providing category information capable of being selected by the user to identify a topic
associated with the user search strategy.
 4. A process according to claim 3, wherein providing said source of profile data includes
providing subcategory information capable of being displayed to the user in response to the user
selection of category and capable of providing information for refining the user search strategy.
 5. A process according to claim 1, wherein analyzing said user search request includes
determining whether a plurality of meanings may be associated with said user search request.
 6. A process according to claim 1, wherein analyzing said user search request includes

matching a portion of said keyphrase to a linguistic database to identify a list of associated meanings.

7. A process according to claim 6, including the act of processing said list of associated meanings to generate a display that presents to the user a plurality of meanings associated with said keyphrase to aid the user in disambiguating between said plural meanings.

8. A process according to claim 6, including the act of processing said list of associated meanings to generate a menu of choices that can be selected by the user to assign at least one of said associated meanings to said keyphrase.

9. A process according to claim 6 wherein analyzing said user search request includes adjusting said user interface as a function of said associated meaning to present to the user a request for information for refining said user search request.

 10. A process according to claim 1, wherein analyzing a search request includes generating a linguistic database for the user representative of keyphrases and associated meanings employed by the user.

11. A process according to claim 1, wherein analyzing a search request includes accessing demographic information associated with the user for generating said expanded search request.

12. A process according to claim 1, wherein processing said user search request and said at least one meaning to generate an expanded search request, includes accessing a linguistic knowledgebase having information representative of a list of sense signals, each sense signal being information for describing a linguistic meaning, and a list of words.

Sub A3 13. A process according to claim 12, including the employing said keyphrase to access said linguistic database and identify a sense signal associated with said keyphrase.

14. A process according to claim 12, including employing information from said linguistic knowledgebase to expand said user search string.

Sub A4 15. A system for aiding a user in developing a search request, comprising
a linguistic knowledgebase having information representative of a list of sense signals,
each sense signal being information for describing a linguistic meaning, and a list of words,
a controller for generating an interface for collecting from the user a keyphrase
representative of a user search request, and for employing said keyphrase to access information
from said linguistic knowledgebase to generate an expanded search request,
and
a query mechanism for processing said expanded search request to generate a set of
boolean search requests, each associated with at least one preselected search engine and for
providing each said boolean search request to a respective preselected search engine.

16. A system according to claim 15, further including
a controller for adjusting the interface, as a function of information accessed from said
linguistic database, for guiding the user in disambiguating between meanings for the keyphrase.

Sub A5 17. A system according to claim 15, further comprising
a mechanism for generating a linguistic database for the user, representative of
keyphrases and associated meanings employed by the user.

18. A system according to claim 15, further comprising

means for identifying demographic information associated with said user and for employing said demographic information for expanding said user search request.

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19. A system according to claim 15, wherein said controller further includes means for accessing flag signals from said linguistic knowledgebase, said flag signals being representative of control information capable of controlling the type of expanded search requests that can be generated.

20. A system according to claim 15, wherein said controller includes means for processing said keyphrase to generate a plurality of expanded search requests, each capable of identifying information within a database.

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